

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 003014 TOSEC 130169
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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE
INFO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 003014 TOSEC 130169

NODIS
FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PEPR, XF

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE TO EILTS AND LEWIS

1. IN LIGHT OF INITIAL REACTION IN EGYPT AND ISRAEL TO
PALESTINIAN LANGUAGE IN PRESIDENT'S PRESS STATEMENT AT
ASWAN, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SEND POLICY GUIDANCE
TO EILTS AND LEWIS FOR PERIOD AHEAD AS BOTH COUNTRIES
MANEUVER TO POSITION THEMSELVES FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS
ISSUE IN JERUSALEM TALKS. FOLLOWING IS DRAFT TELEGRAM FOR
YOUR APPROVAL.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

ACTION: CAIRO IMMEDIATE, TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

INFO: (ALL IMMEDIATE) ABU DHABI, ALGIERS, AMMAN, BAGHDAD,
BEIRUT, DAMASCUS DOHA, JIDDA, KHARTOUM, KUWAIT, MANAMA,
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MUSCAT, RABAT, SANA, TRIPOLI, TUNIS, TEHRAN

SECRET/NODIS

SUBJECT: POLICY GUIDANCE FOR AMBASSADORS FROM SECRETARY

1. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IN HIS ASWAN DEPARTURE STATEMENT

ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE ARE LIKELY TO BE SUBJECT TO DIVERSE

INTERPRETATIONS IN ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL AND YOU WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE PRESSED FOR CLARIFICATION AND SUPPORT FOR ONE INTERPRETATION OR ANOTHER.

2. WE WANT TO RESERVE ANY FURTHER STATEMENT OF U.S. VIEWS UNTIL AFTER NEGOTIATIONS HAVE RESUMED IN JERUSALEM POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING AND MAKE ANY FURTHER U.S. INPUTS IN THAT CONTEXT. IN RESPONSE TO ANY PROBING OF U.S. POSITION BY HOST GOVERNMENTS, YOU SHOULD THEREFORE NOTE THAT SECRETARY (IN NBC INTERVIEW) HAS DESCRIBED PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION AS AN "EVOLUTION" OF OUR THINKING BUT THAT, WITH JERUSALEM TALKS ONLY TEN DAYS AWAY, WE BELIEVE IT PREFERABLE TO DEFER FURTHER U.S. COMMENT ON THIS QUESTION UNTIL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE RESUMED AND TO DISCUSS IT IN THAT CONTEXT IN LIGHT OF POSITIONS OF THE TWO PARTIES.

3. FYI. WE ARE OBVIOUSLY IN A DELICATE STAGE AND MUST AVOID ANY STATEMENTS WHICH WILL FEED EITHER ISRAELI CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN U.S. POSITION ON "PALESTINIAN STATE" QUESTION OR EGYPTIAN TENDENCY TO ASSUME THAT "EVOLUTION" OF OUR THINKING IMPLIES MORE THAN IS IN FACT THE CASE.

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4. FOR CAIRO: AS EXAMPLE OF RISKS WE RUN AT THIS STAGE, WE HAVE NOTED REPORTS BY JONATHAN RANDAL (WASHINGTON POST) AND DAVID WATTS (LONDON TIMES) FROM ASWAN QUOTING AMERICAN DIPLOMAT TO EFFECT THAT AS RESULT OF CARTER/SADAT MEETING, EGYPTIAN AND U.S. POSITIONS ON SELF-DETERMINATION ARE JUST "HAIR'S BREADTH" APART. THIS CAN ONLY SERVE TO EXCITE ISRAELI SUSPICIONS AND COMPLICATE U.S. HONEST BROKER ROLE, PARTICULARLY SINCE WE HAVE TOLD ISRAELIS THAT, WHILE ASWAN FORMULATION ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE REPRESENTS EVOLUTION IN OUR THINKING, WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT PREJUDGES SELF-DETERMINATION QUESTION IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY.

5. FOR TEL AVIV: AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE, IT MAY BE USEFUL IN PRE-JERUSALEM PERIOD TO MAKE POINT TO ISRAELIS THAT NEITHER EGYPTIANS NOR SAUDIS ARE SPEAKING ANY LONGER TO US OF NEED FOR ISRAELI AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. BOTH NOW SPEAK ONLY IN TERMS OF "PRINCIPLE" OF SELF-DETERMINATION, AND WITH INCREASING RECOGNITION THAT THERE IS NO REALISTIC POSSIBILITY OF ANY EARLY APPLICATION OF THAT PRINCIPLE BUT RATHER THAT IT IS SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATION AND IS

SOMETHING FOR THE FUTURE IF EVER. WE RECOGNIZE THAT

EVEN THIS PRESENTS SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR ISRAEL, BUT
BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO TAKE NOTE OF FACT THAT THERE
HAS ALSO BEEN EVOLUTION IN SOME ARAB THINKING FROM
EARLIER AUTOMATIC EQUATING OF SELF-DETERMINATION WITH
INDEPENDENT STATE. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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